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Russia Signals Possible Move to International Requirements

Report Categories:

Sanitary/Phytosanitary/Food Safety

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Report Highlights:

The GOR issued Resolution #761, which calls for restrictive, non-science-based Russian sanitary and epidemiological requirements, veterinary, sanitary and phyto-sanitary measures to be harmonized with international norms. However, the details of Resolution #716's implementation remain unclear.

General Information:

Resolution #761 calls to harmonize Russian sanitary and epidemiological requirements, veterinary, sanitary and phytosanitary measures with international standards where Russian standards are more restrictive and are not science-based. Russia's Ministry of Health and Social Development (MinHealth) and Ministry of Agriculture (MinAg) should establish procedures to compare Russian and international standards before 2010. The evaluation will take into consideration the requests of interested entities, including foreign governments.

Local authorities do not yet appear fully aware of how Resolution #716 will interact with either the Commission for the Development of Federal Sanitary-epidemiological Norms, located within MinHealth, or the Interagency Expert Commission, led by the MinAg and including MinHealth. Currently, the Commission for the Development of Federal Sanitary-epidemiological Norms is accepting applications from the scientific community and interested industries to establish such norms addressed in Resolution #761. Also currently, the Interagency Expert Commission is reviewing and seeking comments on a draft Federal Law regarding the Special Technical Regulation "On the Requirements for Poultry, Poultry Meat, Processed Poultry Products, their Production Process, and Handling¹."

Resolution #761 in Russian can be found at the following website of the Russian Government:
<http://gov.consultant.ru/doc.asp?ID=54553>.

Unofficial Translation of GOR Resolution #761:

[Begin Text]

Resolution of September 28, 2009, # 761 "On ensuring harmonization of Russian sanitary-epidemiological requirements, veterinary-sanitary and phytosanitary measures with international standards".

With the purpose of improvement of the system of legal regulation in the area of protection of life and health of humans, animals and plants, further harmonization with international standards of sanitary and epidemiological requirements, veterinary, sanitary and phytosanitary measures in force in Russia with international standards, the Government of the Russian Federation stipulates:

1. Determine that legal acts, establishing sanitary-epidemiological requirements, veterinary-sanitary and phytosanitary measures are subject to expertise for their compliance with the standards, recommendations and other documents of international organizations, including the World Health Organization, Codex Alimentarius Commission, World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), and corresponding international and regional organizations, which are acting within the framework of the International Plant Protection Convention (hereafter

¹ The draft Federal Law regarding the Special Technical Regulation "On the Requirements for Poultry, Poultry Meat, Processed Poultry Products, their Production Process, and Handling in Russian can be found at the following website of the Russian Poultry Union: <http://www.rps.ru/texregulir.shtml>

referred to as expert evaluation and international standards)

2. Legal acts establishing sanitary and epidemiological requirements, veterinary, sanitary and phytosanitary measures, which, as a result of the expert evaluation have restrictive character compared to international standards, without scientific basis of such restriction or risk level for life or health of humans, animals and plants, are subject to be brought in compliance with international standards.
3. The Ministry of Health and Social Development of the Russian Federation and the Ministry of Agriculture of the Russian Federation shall:
 - within 3 months from the effective date of this Resolution develop and approve the order of carrying out an expert evaluation within their competence;
 - ensure the carrying out of the expert evaluation is on the basis of written requests from interested entities, including the governments of foreign countries, with their possible participation in its implementation or upon their initiative. Within 30 days from the receipt of a written request, the corresponding federal executive entity shall acknowledge the receipt of the request to the requesting party.
4. The present Resolution becomes effective of the date of its official publication.

Chairman of the Government of the Russian Federation
V.Putin

[End Text]